IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-22 (Cancelled).

23. (Currently Amended) A process for fermentatively preparing an L-amino acid, comprising

fermenting a modified microorganism of the genus Escherichia ~~*Enterobacteriaceae* family~~ for a time and under conditions suitable for the production of the L-amino acid;

concentrating the L-amino acid in the medium and/or the Escherichia cells; and

isolating the L-amino acid,

wherein said modified microorganism comprises an ~~eliminated~~ inactivated poxB gene which encodes a pyruvate oxidase, wherein ~~elimination~~ inactivation is achieved by one or more methods of mutagenesis selected from the group consisting of deletion mutagenesis with deletion of at least one base pair in the poxB gene, insertional mutagenesis due to homologous recombination in the poxB gene, and transition or transversion mutagenesis with incorporation of a non-sense mutation in the poxB gene .

24. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 23, further comprising concentrating the L-amino acid in a medium used for the fermenting or in cells of the modified microorganism prior to isolating the L-amino acid.

25. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 23, wherein said L-amino acid is L-threonine, L-valine, L-lysine, L-isoleucine, L-methionine, or L-homoserine.

26. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 25, wherein said L-amino acid is L-threonine.

27. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 25, wherein said L-amino acid is L-valine.

28. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 25, wherein said L-amino acid is L-lysine.

Claim 29 (Cancelled).

30. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 23, wherein the modified microorganism further comprises at least one overexpressed gene product compared to the unmodified starting microorganism, wherein the gene product is encoded by a gene selected from the group consisting of:

at least one gene encoded by an E. coli thrABC operon, which codes for aspartate kinase, homoserine dehydrogenase, homoserine kinase, and threonine synthase,

a Corynebacterium glutamicum pyc gene which codes for pyruvate carboxylase,

an E. coli pps gene which codes for phosphoenol pyruvate synthase,

an E. coli ppc gene which codes for phosphoenol pyruvate carboxylase,

E. coli pntA and pntB genes which code for pyridine transhydrogenase,

an E. coli rhtB gene which which codes for a protein that imparts homoserine resistance,

an E. coli mqo gene which codes for malate:quinone oxidoreductase,

an E. coli rhtC gene which codes for a protein that imparts threonine resistance,

~~an~~ a *Corynebacterium glutamicum* thrE gene which codes for a protein that provides threonine export, and

an E. coli gdhA gene which codes for glutamate dehydrogenase.

31. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 23, wherein the modified microorganism further comprises at least one gene whose expression is reduced or eliminated compared to the unmodified starting microorganism, wherein the at least one gene is selected from the group consisting of an E. coli tdh gene which codes for threonine dehydrogenase, an E. coli mdh gene which codes for malate dehydrogenase, and an E. coli pckA gene which codes for the enzyme phosphoenol pyruvate carboxykinase, when the modified microorganism is E. coli.

32. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 31, wherein the at least one gene is eliminated.

33. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 23, wherein the modified microorganism is *Escherichia coli*.

34. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 33, wherein the modified microorganism further comprises at least one gene whose expression is eliminated compared to the unmodified starting microorganism, wherein the at least one gene is ~~the~~ *E. coli* yjfA (AAC77180) or *E. coli* ytfP (AAC77179).

35. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 26, wherein the modified microorganism is MG442ΔpoxB transformed with plasmid pMW218gdhA.

36. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 26, wherein the modified microorganism is MG442ΔpoxB transformed with plasmid pMW219rhtC.

37. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 28, wherein the modified microorganism is TOC21RΔpoxB.

38. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 27, wherein the modified microorganism is B-12288ΔpoxB.

39. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 23, wherein ~~elimination~~ inactivation is achieved by deletion mutagenesis with deletion of at least one base pair in the poxB gene.

40. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 23, wherein ~~elimination~~ inactivation is achieved by insertional mutagenesis due to homologous recombination~~, and~~.

41. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 23, wherein ~~elimination~~ inactivation is achieved by transition or transversion mutagenesis with incorporation of a non-sense mutation in the poxB gene.

42. (New) The process of Claim 23, wherein the poxB gene prior to be inactivated comprises SEQ ID NO:1.

43. (New) The process of Claim 23, wherein the poxB gene prior to being inactivated comprises a polynucleotide sequence encoding a protein comprising SEQ ID NO:2.